

EFFECTIVENESS
OF COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY
IMPLEMENTATION IN SLOVAKIA –
– EUROPEAN PROJECT IMPLEMENTED
BY THE ASSOCIATION
OF AGRARIAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL LAWYERS
EFEKTÍVNOSŤ IMPLEMENTOVANIA
SPOLOČNEJ POĽNOHOSPODÁRSKEJ POLITIKY
NA SLOVENSKU – EURÓPSKY PROJEKT
IMPLEMENTOVANÝ ASOCIÁCIOU
AGRÁRNYCH A ENVIRONMENTÁLNYCH PRÁVNÍKOV

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I. Introduction

The Common Agricultural Policy is the first and most extensive of the Community's integrated policies⁽¹⁾. It belongs to the most important policies, takes the majority of the EU budget and represents the majority of the EU legal regulations. The agro-food industry accounts for 6% of the EU's GDP and provides 46 million jobs, which even strengthens the importance of the policy⁽²⁾. The CAP was the 1st policy where most of the

⁽¹⁾ Rogoznicki et al. (2018).

⁽²⁾ Schwarcz (2017).

competencies have been transferred to the European level. The CAP can be described as having three dimensions: market support, income support and rural development. The three dimensions are interconnected, and overall sustainability depends on the ability of the three dimensions to act collectively. Farm policy in the EU can have significant implications not just for producers, consumers and other market actors domestically, but also at the international level⁽³⁾. The CAP departed from the traditional market support to create more sophisticated intervention related to the changing macroeconomics conditions

⁽³⁾ Matthews (2018).

Abstract (EN)

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is the oldest EU policy and is one of the supranational areas and policies of the European Union (EU). CAP introduced diverse legal and economic tools for comprehensive and smart restructuring of the Slovak agriculture and rural areas. With the purpose to improve the CAP implementation in Slovakia, the project "Effectiveness of Common Agricultural Policy implementation in Slovakia" (CAPE) was prepared and submitted by the Association of Agrarian and Environmental Lawyers. The project was approved by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and it has been granted from September 2019 (Decision Nr. 2019-1802/001.001, Project Nr. 611792-EPP-1-2019-1-SK-EPPJMO-SUPPA). The idea to submit project proposal aroused from the need to contribute to improving the Common Agricultural Policy implementation in Slovakia. The main aim of the project is to perform the interdisciplinary research in the field of the effectiveness of CAP implementation in Slovakia with the specific objectives to discuss and advise local, regional, national policymakers and decision-makers on different aspects of the CAP implementation, transfer the research results and the expertise to the practice and to disseminate the project outcomes among interested target groups and civil society.

Abstrakt (SK)

Spoločná poľnohospodárska politika (SPP) je najstaršou politikou EÚ a tiež jednou z nadnárodných oblastí a politik EÚ. SPP zaviedla rôzne právne a ekonomické nástroje na komplexnú a inteligentnú reštrukturalizáciu slovenského poľnohospodárstva a vidieckych oblastí. Za účelom zlepšenia implementácie SPP na Slovensku pripravila a predložila Asociácia agrárnych a environmentálnych právnikov projekt Efektívnosť implementácie spoločnej poľnohospodárskej politiky na Slovensku (CAPE). Projekt bol schválený Výkonnou agentúrou pre vzdelávanie, audiovizuálny sektor a kultúru od septembra 2019 (rozhodnutie č. 2019-1802 / 001.001, projekt č. 611792-EPP-1-2019-1-SK-EPPJMO-SUPPA). Myšlienka predložiť návrh projektu vyvstala z potreby prispieť k zlepšeniu implementácie SPP na Slovensku. Hlavným cieľom projektu je vykonať interdisciplinárny výskum v oblasti implementácie SPP na Slovensku. Špecifickými cieľmi je viesť dialóg a radiť miestnym, regionálnym, národným tvorcom politik a rozhodnutí v rôznych aspektoch implementácie SPP, prenášať výsledky výskumu a odborné poznatky do praxe a šíriť výstupy projektu medzi cieľovými skupinami, ktoré prejavia záujem, a tiež občianskou spoločnosťou.

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and expectations of the society⁽⁴⁾.

Although membership in the European Union implies many advantages, the period after joining this community can be quite economically unstable for some “new” countries⁽⁵⁾. Before the “Eastern enlargement of the CAP” discussion focused on the question whether the system of direct transfers should be granted to the new member countries and whether sufficient funds would be available⁽⁶⁾.

Slovakia joined the EU in 2004, thereby assuming the rights and commitments under the CAP. During this period, the CAP introduced diverse legal and economic tools for comprehensive and smart restructuralisation of the Slovak agriculture and rural areas. Beside these facts, Slovakia as a post-communist country has significant problems that violate the proper CAP implementation for diverse target groups.

With the purpose to improve the CAP implementation in Slovakia, the main aim of the project “CAPE” is to perform the interdisciplinary research in the field of the effectiveness of CAP implementation in Slovakia with the specific objectives to discuss and advise local, regional, national policymakers and decision-makers on different aspects of the CAP implementation, transfer the research results and the expertise to the practice and to disseminate the project outcomes among interested target groups and civil society.

The project was prepared and submitted by the Association of Agrarian and Environmental Lawyers (AAEP), which associates both natural and legal persons, and its objective is promotion of agrarian and environmental law and educational and scientific activities in this field. The AAEP was registered on 15th May 2018 at the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic. It is a civic non-profit organization established under Act no. 83/1990 Coll. as amended. AAEL was accepted as a full member of the European Council for Rural Law on 13th October 2018 (CEDR from the French title „Comité Européen de Droit Rurals“, established in 1957). It is a unique pan-European organization representing lawyers and experts working in the field of agrarian law.

As CEDR has a significant and specific consultative role in relation to FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) as well as the role of the observer vis-à-vis the Council of Europe, which regularly provides advice and assistance to the EU institutions, the membership of AAEP in CEDR, reflects the quality and importance of the most important national associations in the EU as well as lawyers and experts from outside the EU working in the field of legal relations in agriculture and rural areas.

⁽⁴⁾ Stepien and Czyzewski (2019).

⁽⁵⁾ Stojanovic (2019).

⁽⁶⁾ Fischler (2001).

II. Objective and methodology

Project objectives are based on the fact that an effective way of addressing these needs is through the high quality of research activities that will be transferred to specific target groups – policymakers, decision-makers, stakeholders (farmers, food processors, professional groups), potential stakeholders (students, young graduates) and civil society. Long-term agricultural research could help address a number of pressing national agricultural research priorities, especially those questions requiring a long-time frame at field and larger spatial scales⁽⁷⁾.

The objective of the paper is analysis of the importance of project implementation in order to broaden knowledge of students, policymakers and researchers who are considered as the main project target group.

The methodology used was determined according to the objectives set.

The project activities were designed to achieve the project objectives as follows:

- Research activities – will create a unique research board platform for gathering and exchange existing research information and strengthen the cooperation in multidisciplinary aspects of the CAP. Senior researchers, young researchers and PhD. students will be involved in research. Research results will be transferred to all other project activities and they will promote European integration processes in the field. Common research results will be presented in the scientific papers and posters in scientific journals and at international conferences.
- Deliverables are designed to transfer information from the research to target groups. All activities will be visible, transparent and accessible in order to ensure efficient achievement of dedicated objective and with the impact to raise awareness of the land value.
- Events will properly supplement the achieving of the project objectives. Events are designed to exchange practices and to foster open dialogue between professional decision-making authorities, politicians, civil society. Events will bring synergic understanding about the need for more effective CAP implementation in Slovakia and could have an impact to adjust helpful measures in the field.

III. Expected Results

1. Common Agricultural Policy

Common agricultural policy (CAP) is the most extensive and complex European policy. It was created as a partnership between agriculture and society, and between Europe and its farmers. It aims to:

1. support farmers and improve agricultural productivity, so that consumers have a stable supply of affordable food;

⁽⁷⁾ Robertson et al. (2008).

Keywords (EN)

Common Agricultural Policy, implementation, Association of Agrarian and Environmental Lawyers, research, European Union

Kľúčové slová (SK)

Spoločná poľnohospodárska politika, implementácia, Asociácia agrárnych a environmentálnych právnikov, výskum, Európska únia

2. ensure that the European Union (EU) farmers can make a reasonable living;
3. help tackling climate change and the sustainable management of natural resources;
4. maintain rural areas and landscapes across the EU;
5. keep the rural economy alive promoting jobs in farming, agri-foods industries and associated sectors.

To manage a wide scope of the agriculture, agri-environment and rural development, the CAP belongs to the common European policy implying that legal regulations have a direct effect in all EU member states. Common policy brings advantages in particular to promoting competitiveness, administrative simplification and equality before the law; on the other hand, several external factors may cause its incorrect implementation.

CAP introduced in Slovakia diverse legal and economic tools for further restructuring of the Slovak agriculture and rural areas. Beside these facts, Slovakia as a post-communist country has significant problems that violate the proper CAP implementation for beneficiaries as follows:

6. land fragmentation and the slow realisation of land consolidations;
 7. unsettled ownership and use relationships;
 8. weak awareness of the value of land causes the undeveloped land market;
- an uncoordinated extension system for farmers.

Persistent problems cause dissatisfaction, especially among small, medium-sized and family farmers. To solve a situation presupposes a systemic solution involving an interdisciplinary approach that hampers the lack of expertise in the field and weak state interest in solving problems in agriculture.

The project arises from the above-mentioned problems. There is a strong need to perform the interdisciplinary research on the effectiveness of the CAP implementation in Slovakia and based on the research results to improve the implementation of CAP in Slovakia.

2. Project activities

The AAEP will organise in the framework of the project CAPE following events:

- a) series of workshops will be organised to build knowledge in the field and to encourage cooperation between academics and practice. The workshops will use front lessons and debate about the discussed topics.
- b) series of roundtables will be organised to foster political debate between academics and politicians/decision-makers to contribute to the possible improvements of the CAP implementation at the local/regional/national level.
- c) international conference will be organised to exchange research results of the experts on the field in order to improve governance and integrated implementation of the CAP.

Activities of the proposed project will be realized through the following outputs:

- project website updated continuously during and after project lifetime;

- six thematically practical manuals related to the CAP published during project lifetime;
- report about the research results published once a year;
- six thematically workshops for stakeholders and interested students and graduates organized during project lifetime;
- three roundtables for policymakers, decision-makers, academics organized during the project lifetime;
- five scientific papers/posters published each year;
- international conference for academics, stakeholders, policymakers and decision-makers organised once per project lifetime;
- participation of researchers in the international conferences in Portugal
- study visit of researchers to the Council for Rural Law in France.

Outcomes of the proposed project are:

- reinforced research activities related to the CAP implementation in Slovakia;
- improved proper implementation of the CAP by the stakeholders (farmers, food processors and professional groups) and potential stakeholders (students, graduates);
- improved policy and decision-making processes in the field of agricultural policy at the local, regional, national level;
- increased recognisability and visibility of the association in the international professional environment.

3. Target groups

Research activities will be covered by PhD. students, young researchers and senior researchers from different scientific fields. Research results will be published in the scientific journals and/or at the scientific conferences and will be included to all project activities.

Gathered information, knowledge and research results will be transferred to all relevant target groups by the following project activities:

1. Deliverables will build scientific or practical knowledge to various target groups as follows:

- the project website will provide information about the project activities and provide the latest knowledge about diverse aspects of the CAP implementation in Slovakia and other EU member states.
- six thematically practical manuals will improve the professional knowledge about the various topics related to the CAP implementation and related national agricultural legislation for stakeholders (farmers, food processors, professional groups), students and young graduates interested in agriculture.
- the report will provide research results for the policymakers and decision-makers at the local, regional, national level, stakeholders, academics, students.

Accessibility of the deliverables published in the project website will raise awareness in this area for civil society.

2. Proposed events are designed to build professional knowledge and exchange practice and experiences between academics and

practice:

- six thematically workshops will explain and trained selected topics of the CAP implementation in order to improve knowledge and skills for stakeholders (farmers, food processors, professional groups) and potential stakeholders (students and young graduates interested in agriculture);
- three roundtables will be organised to discuss possible improvements of the legal regulations at the local/regional/national policy in accordance with the CAP and to strengthen cooperation between practice and the AAEP.
- conference attendance and study visit will ensure the visibility of the AAEP in the international environment.
- international conference - encourage experts on different aspects of the CAP to discuss the readiness of the EU member states for implementation of the CAP in the programming period 2020-2027.

3. *Dissemination activities will improve the awareness of the importance of the integrated agricultural governance of the EU in civil society.*

Project activities will affect the following target groups:

1. Young researchers will have an opportunity to work alongside the senior researchers and experts, which will deepen their professional skills in the field. Research activities will give them the possibility to work in the multidisciplinary teams, to cooperate across diverse scientific fields and thus building the occasion to present their progressive approaches in the concrete issues of the Common Agricultural Policy.
2. Stakeholders (farmers, food processors, professional groups) - the project activities will provide the latest information and building knowledge of different aspects of the CAP and will encourage dialogue between the AAEP and the practice. The cooperation could have an impact on understanding and improving the implementation of legal regulations of the CAP in Slovakia.
3. Policymakers and decision-makers at the local, regional national level - the project activities will encourage the political debates about the improvement of the implementation of the CAP which will have an impact on the efficiency of the decisions related to agricultural land management at the local, regional and national level.
4. Potential stakeholders (students and young graduates interested in working in agriculture) - the project activities will enhance their professional capacity to solve the issues related to agriculture in a wider multidisciplinary perspective. Supported events and deliverables will bring additional information and practical skills for the target group. Project activities may allow better employability in the labour market.
5. Civil society - transparency and availability of the project activities will have an impact on the proper understanding of diverse aspects of the CAP and increasing awareness of the agricultural land value for civil society.
6. Association of Agrarian and Environmental Lawyers- project activities will enhance its recognisability and confidence for the relevant stakeholders.

4. *Project impact and sustainability*

Impact at the national and international level:

- promotion of excellence of research in the field of the CAP;
- understanding of the CAP as a socio-economic and environmental instrument directed to the sustainable food and agriculture in Slovakia and the EU;
- harmonization of policies and actions related to agricultural management in Slovakia and the EU;
- increasing awareness of diverse target groups of the importance of agriculture and its proper governance in the EU.

The continuity of the project activities will be ensured through interactive website updated also after the project lifetime and cooperation of AAEP and target groups in continuing teaching, research and further project activities.

VI. Conclusion

The CAP has undergone several reforms and at the moment CAP meets big challenges related to the economic prospects for agriculture and rural areas, care for the environment, health and safe food production, action over climate change, circular economy and sustainability. Research and educational institutions can play an important role in these issues by transferring latest research knowledge to decision makers, policy makers, farmers and students.

The CAPE project activities were designed to advice stakeholders at following levels:

- the local/regional/national level - the building knowledge about the policy implementation and the adjustment of dysfunctional legal regulations will improve the coherent CAP implementation in Slovakia.
- EU level - the integrated policy implementation in the EU Member States ensure sustainable agriculture, which will contribute to developing the land footprint of the EU.

Activities proposed in the CAPE project can significantly contribute to understanding the CAP measures and their implementation at all above-mentioned levels.

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Other sources

- Detailed project description of the project „Effectiveness of Common Agricultural Policy implementation in Slovakia“ submitted under Jean Monnet Activities, Erasmus+, Call 2019
- www.aaep.uniag.sk
- www.cape.uniag.sk

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